

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 9, 2009

STATE OF UTAH

SCHOOL & INSTITUTIONAL TRUST LANDS ADMINISTRATION

675 EAST 500 SOUTH, SUITE 500

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84102

SITLA CATCHES AND PROSECUTES ATV LAWBREAKERS

The money the State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands (SITLA) expends on mitigating the effects of vandalism, trespassing, and criminal mischief affects the amount of money available to schools. These issues are now being closely observed by SITLA. Three men found out the hard way when they were issued citations by SITLA's enforcement officer, a Special Agent from the Utah Attorney General's office.

In July of 2008 the three were observed by one of the agency's crime detectors – a hidden camera – breaking a lock in order to exit the road from Bobby Duke Ridge in the Tabby Mountain area. SITLA's Tabby Mountain block has been leased for a number of years by a logging company for commercial timber operations and also by various livestock owners.

The McDonald Basin Road connects to Red Creek Road, a well-traveled and public dirt road. The gate to the McDonald Basin Road was designed specifically to not limit public access during the dry months of the year to motor bikes and Type I or single-rider ATVs. It has a large gate for the logging trucks and an opening to the side for the passage of bikes and Type I ATVs.

The men were documented by the camera driving to the gate from Red Creek Road, with a Type I ATV and a side-by-side Type II ATV, around 8:00 a.m. and then leaving the area. They accessed the area of Bobby Duke Ridge another way and came out at the McDonald Basin gate later that afternoon. At that point, the camera clearly shows the three men breaking the lock on the main gate with a come-a-long tool brought with them for just this purpose.

Through skilled detective work, the enforcement officer was able to positively identify the men. They were cited on January 14, 2009. The citation included trespassing on SITLA and criminal mischief. The men pled guilty, and each received a fine of \$1,174 and 12 months probation until fine is paid. This money will go back to the Permanent School Fund.

Money generated from school trust lands is deposited in the state Permanent School Fund, a perpetual endowment that annually distributes income to each K-12 public school in Utah.

###

CONTACT:

NormaLee McMichael 801-538-5105

Dave Hebertson 801-538-5102